this feature of Applicant's independent claims is not shown or suggested in the Thomas reference.

In the "Response to Arguments" section, the Office Action mischaracterizes the Thomas reference. The "location repository" is called meta-data and the "location of an object" is called the true-data attribute. The "location repository" is a data structure but does not indicate any information at all about the location of an object. What about the location of an object does the repository indicate? Does it indicate that the location is in a particular domain of a storage system? Does it indicate what users or group of users can access the location? It is believed that there is nothing about the "location repository" that describes anything about the locations of objects. In fact, the location repository contains a number of attributes, where each attribute describes the location of a particular object.

Thomas describes a profile retrieval system that is used to customize an instance of a created object using data that is stored in various repositories. Each repository in Thomas has a number of entries where each entry includes what is referred to in the instant application as a "true-data attribute" Importantly, there is not a single instance in Thomas where meta-data is stored with or associated with the true-data attributes. The Office Action relies on the language at col. 3, lines 32-42 to show such an association. However, the "information identifying the storage location of an object" is an attribute of the object, not an example of meta-data. This is evident in Table 1 where this feature is illustrated. In table 1, each object is associated with a number of attributes such as data storage locations and accessor object brokers. There is no meta-data associated with these attributes.

If we break table 1 down for analysis, the entry labeled "Object#1" is a header having a value that identifies a name or unique ID for a particular object. The next entry, labeled "Location#1", indicates a place where object#1 is stored. Hence, Location#1 is an attribute of object#1. The value contained in Location#1 is not meta-data because it does not describe anything about the name of "object#1". What is missing from Thomas is any indication of meta-data that would describe something about the true-data contents of each entry. For example, if Table 1 included an entry that indicated the name "object#1" contains 18 characters, or the name of "object#1"

was accessible only to certain users, such an entry would be meta-data. Instead, each entry includes only an attribute of the object itself, not meta-data describing the true-value of the attribute.

To be clear, what claim 1, for example, calls for is a method in which each attribute in Table 1, such as each location number and each object broker, would have meta-data associated therewith. Thomas simply does not teach this type of information.

The amendments to claims 1, 18 and 41 call for the meta-data to be stored in the same profile object as the true-data. This is intended to avoid confusion over the distinction between storing data in various repositories that may be related somehow, as shown in Thomas, with creating an association in a single data structure between true-data and meta-data.

Claims 2-17, 19-40, and 43-53 that depend from claims 1, 18 and 42, respectively, are believed to be allowable for at least the reasons set out above. Moreover, the Office Action consistently refers to portions of the Thomas reference that illustrate various attributes and equates them with the claimed meta-data values set out in the independent claims. **The distinction between attributes and meta-data cannot be ignored, even if it is difficult to understand.** Hence, each of the dependent claims is believed to be independently allowable because they call for specific meta-data values that are not shown or suggested in the relied on reference.

B. Conclusion

In view of all of the above claims 1-53 are believed to be allowable and the case in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested.

No fee is believed to be required by this response as determined on the accompanying transmittal letter. Should any other fee be required, please charge Deposit 50-1123. Should any extension of time be required please consider this a petition therefore and charge the required fee to Deposit Account 50-1123. Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "**Version With Markings**

To Show Changes Made"

Respectfully submitted,

Date: September 27, 2001

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

A. In the claims

1(Twice Amended). A method for managing a profile service, the method comprising:

storing at least one true-data attribute in a profile object, said true-data attribute includes a true- data key and at least one true-data value field;

associating at least one meta-data attribute with said true-data attribute, said meta-data attribute includes a meta-data key and at least one meta-data value field, wherein the meta-data value field describes the associated true-data attribute;

storing said associated meta-data attribute in said profile object; and

managing said true-data attribute according to said associated meta-data attribute.

18(Twice Amended). A profiling service for accessing user data, said profiling service comprising:

a plurality of profile objects;

at least one true-data attribute contained in each of said profile objects, said true-data attribute includes a true-data key and at least one true-data value field;

at least one meta-data attribute associated to said true-data attribute and contained in said profile object, said meta-data attribute includes a meta-data key and at least one meta-data value field, wherein the meta-data value field describes the associated true-data attribute; and

methods within each profile object to access the user data according to said meta-data attribute.

41(Twice Amended). A profiling service for accessing user data, said profiling service comprising:

means for storing at least one true-data attribute in a profile object, said true-data attribute includes a true-data key and at least one true-data value field;

means for associating at least one meta-data attribute with said true-data attribute, said meta-data attribute includes a meta-data key and at least one meta data value field, wherein the meta-data value field describes the associated true-data attribute;

means for storing said associated meta-data attribute with said associated true-data attribute; and

means for managing said true-data attribute according to said associated meta-data attribute.

42(Twice Amended). A profile object for maintaining client configuration data in a hierarchical fashion, the profile object comprising:

at least one true-data attribute in the profile object, said true-data attribute includes a true-data key and at least one true-data value field; and

at least one meta-data attribute associated to with said true-data attribute and stored in said profile object, said meta-data attribute includes a meta-data key and at least one meta-data value field, wherein the meta-data value field describes the associated true-data attribute.